



MISSION STATEMENT

To make available technical, financial and educational resources to meet the conservation needs of the citizens who occupy and use the natural resources of the District.

NORTH YAKIMA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Newsletter Date

Volume 1, Issue 1

Introduction to the NYCD

The North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD) is dedicated to maintaining the North Yakima County's renewable natural resources. The District is composed of farmers, landowners and concerned citizens who serve on the NYCD's Board of Supervisor as volunteers. NYCD is bordered by the crest of the Cascades to the west and the Columbia River to the east with the Yakima County line and Ahtanum Ridge forming the northern and southern boundaries respectfully.

The NYCD Board of Supervisors Chair is Gail Thornton; Vice Chair is Bill Gillespie; Auditor is Dustin Melius, Frank Hendrix is a member and Diana Hillis-Comini, became a board member in October of 2007.

The staff consists of Mike Tobin, District Manager; Jackie Whitnall, Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant; Brian Schmidt, Resource Specialist; David Child, YTAHP Coordinator and Jenny Hendricks, Resource Technician.

The North Yakima Conservation District works with all units of government, commodity groups and individuals in an effort to use, protect and enhance the District's natural resources. Through use of Memorandums of Agreement and Understanding NYCD is able to work with many federal, state and local entities to better protect the natural resource base to provide non-regulatory programs that assist landowners in the wise use and enhancement of their natural resources.

We're on the Web!!

<http://www.nycd.scc.wa.gov>

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Volume 1, Issue 1

Page 2

*****Featured Project*****

Cowiche Creek Habitat Restoration Project



One of the highlights for this Fall was a habitat restoration project on Cowiche Creek. A unique opportunity involved three consecutive private landowners on Cowiche Creek. There were similar resource concerns and objectives among these properties which encompassed nearly 2,000 feet of stream. Rootwads, log vanes, toe logs, and a sweeper log were installed to address severely sloughing streambanks, reduce sedimentation, stabilize streambanks, form pools, and increase habitat diversity. Later this Fall, native vegetation will be planted along both streambanks to improve riparian structure, minimize solar heating, increase root matrices, and provide a future source of large woody debris for recruitment.

A combination of these Best Management Practices improves water quality, and restores in-stream and riparian habitat. As a result, numerous salmonids species (Chinook, Coho, Rainbow and Cutthroat trout) will benefit.

Any landowner within the North Yakima Conservation District boundaries may inquire about the benefits of conservation and the wise use of natural resources on their land. A few examples of these benefits could be improved pasture management, an off-channel watering source/device, minimized impacts from flooding, or streambank stabilization.

For more information contact Brian Schmidt at (509) 454-5736 ext. 124 or

Email Brian-schmidt@wa.nacdnet.org

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Need a Water Meter? District Pays the Cost

The District can PAY for water metering devices for adjudicated water rights in the Yakima River Basin. In September 2005 the Yakima County Superior Court ordered all water right holders with adjudicated water rights in the Yakima River Basin to install a metering or measuring device at each surface water diversion point. You may receive funds to be compliant with the courts order voluntarily through North Yakima Conservation District's (NYCD) Water Metering Program (WMP). The WMP provides funds, to individuals and groups with legal water right diversions from creeks and rivers in the Yakima River Basin, for the measuring device and installation. Through this program NYCD has already assisted over 90 landowners, voluntarily, throughout the Yakima Basin to become compliant with the courts. Assistance has been given to large Irrigation District's, individual water right holders, and groups of water right holders with a common point of diversion.



This program also covers telemetry and automation features.

For more information, technical assistance and an application contact Jenny Hendricks at (509) 454-5736 ext. 123 or jenny-hendricks@wa.nacdnet.org.

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Volume 1, Issue 1

Page 4

Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP)

The **YTAHP** is a partnership between the Ahtanum Irrigation District, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, North Yakima Conservation District, Kittitas County Conservation District, Kittitas Conservation Trust and the South Central Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council . It was formed to provide **voluntary assistance to landowners** with water rights in dealing with unscreened diversions and barriers to fish passage from tributaries in Yakima and Kittitas Counties . The program is funded through a grant from the Bonneville Power Administration.

Goals and Objectives

YTAHP's goal is to restore access to the Yakima River tributaries that historically supported anadromous salmonids, but are currently blocked due to fish passage barriers, screen irrigation withdrawals and to improve instream and riparian habitat wherever possible. We can help landowners with the resource needs they may have on their lands by providing planning, engineering, permitting and construction funding.

Program Contact

Private landowners and anyone interested in the services offered by the YTAHP can contact David Child at 509-454-5736 ext. 117 or email david-child@wa.nacdnet.org. Additional information and a summary of the programs accomplishments can be found on the NYCD website, <http://nycd.scc.wa.gov/ytahp.html>



Pump Screen Installed, Snow Mountain Ranch



Lesh Ditch Diversion Screen



Before and After at a Cowiche Creek Fish Passage Barrier

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Volume 1, Issue 1

Page 5

Plant Material Facility

The North Yakima Conservation District has two major plant sales per year.

This year's Spring Sale is scheduled for March 28 from 8-6 and March 29 from 8-noon. - bare root plants can now be pre-ordered by customers on a first-come, first serve basis. Orders are placed by returning an order form via fax or mail, or phoning the order. Interested individuals should contact the North Yakima Conservation District to be on our brochure mailing list which is usually mailed in February. Order forms are also available on our web site <http://www.nycd.scc.wa.gov>.

Fall Sale (September) - potted plants are sold in a one-day, open-house, clearance manner in late September. Most advertisement is through our mailing list. Occasionally, an advertisement is made via newspaper or radio.

A combination of deciduous and evergreen trees,

shrubs, and wildflowers are made available. The majority of species are native to our area, although a few are non-native species which serve the primary function of being windbreaks.



Many conservation benefits are derived from the vegetation:

- Soil stabilization
- Shade, cover, habitat
- Wildlife food source
- Wind and energy reduction
- A source of clean oxygen
- Beauty and aesthetics

Irrigation Efficiencies Grant Program

Thinking of Upgrading Your Irrigation System?

Are you thinking of converting from rill to sprinklers or even drip irrigation? Do you still flood irrigate your pastures and would like to convert to a wheel line system? Do you still rely on a leaky, hard to manage delivery ditch system? If so the NYCD provides cost-share funds to water users in North Yakima County for projects that increase the efficiency of on-farm water application and conveyance systems. For landowners with an adjudicated water right, cost-share is provided at up to 85% of total project costs. Projects may include (but are not limited to) conversion from flood irrigation to sprinkler irrigation, piping laterals, conversion from wheel-lines to center-pivots, and elimination of leaky delivery ditches. Irrigation improvements not only save water but also improve yields and save time and money.

For more information contact Jenny Hendricks at (509) 454-5736 ext. 123 or email jenny-hendricks@wa.nacdnet.org.

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Bill Eller joined the Conservation Commission as Technical Coordinator of the Columbia River Basin Water Management Program in July 2007. Bill was born in North Dakota, but grew up in Alaska. He attended the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 1990. In 1997, he graduated from the Gonzaga University School of Law with a Juris Doctorate degree and practiced both criminal and civil law while at the Yakima County Prosecuting

Attorney's Office for nine years.

The Columbia River Basin Water Management Program

In February 2006, the Legislature passed Chapter 90.90 RCW, the *Columbia River Water Supply Act* (also referred to as the *Columbia River Basin Water Management Program* ("the Program") or the *Columbia River Basin Water Supply Development Program*). The Act requires the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to develop new water supplies for the Columbia River Basin and to aggressively pursue development of water supplies to benefit both instream and out-of-stream uses.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a reliable supply of water for existing interruptible water rights and for new uses. To accomplish this task, Ecology intends to fund various projects that will conserve water or otherwise make water more available when needed. Part of this new water will remain in the river to enhance flows which will benefit Program participants, existing and new water right users, and aquatic species.

The Program's water supply mandate is broad. The Legislature charges Ecology to consider new storage, modification of existing storage, conservation, acquisition, and any other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies.

The Washington State Conservation Commission is promoting the use of this Program as a funding source for conservation districts to offer technical assistance to their landowners to meet their water conservation project needs. Most of the anticipated technical assistance will likely be assisting landowners to identify potential projects and assisting with the pre-application and application processes.

For more information, please contact Bill Eller at beller@scc.wa.gov.